



Jazzy and Kettle

Rick Quinn

Sefira Lightstone, Illustrator

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In Jazzy and Kettle, two adventurous new friends help each other learn and grow.

In Rick Quinn's picture book *Jazzy and Kettle*, new friends explore the area behind their houses. They climb trees, enjoy nature, and help each other overcome hardships.

Jazzy and Kettle have both just moved to new houses that are next door to each other. They connect over their unique nicknames: Jazzy is always dancing, and Kettle sounds like a teapot when he's happy. Together, they decide to explore.

They encounter a deer, lots of flowers, water, and a tree that Jazzy decides to climb, but Kettle is too afraid to go up with her. Up in the tree, Jazzy thinks she sees all the way to tomorrow. When a branch breaks beneath her feet and she can't get down, Kettle climbs up to help her find her footing.

Jazzy and Kettle are rambunctious and adventurous leads, if not defined beyond their distinguishing habits. Their actions are excellent examples of friendship and helping those in need, but the book doesn't go deeper than that to explore why they do what they do. Their explorations are familiar, and the conflict takes too long to arrive. The ending is satisfying, though.

Jazzy and Kettle's conversations are choppy, and their lines feel disconnected from each other's, rather than like exchanges. Their word choices are clunky and hard to read aloud, and many lines come without dialogue tags, making it hard to tell who's saying what.

Sefira Lightstone's illustrations are beautiful and textured. They render the characters colorful and animated, though Jazzy and Kettle's skin tones aren't consistent. Text pages include sneak-peek images from the pages that follow; it's a fun seek-and-find element. Bright colors and rich details make viewing the story more entertaining than reading it.

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REBECCA MONTERUSSO (July 26, 2019)

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